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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
March 20, 1997

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STATEMENT OF HONORABLE CURT WELDON

**CHAIRMAN, RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT
SUBCOMMITTEE**

**JOINT MILITARY PROCURMENT AND RESEARCH AND
DEVELOPMENT SUBCOMMITTEE HEARING**

**“INFORMATION SUPERIORITY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
BATTLEFIELD”**

MARCH 20, 1997

Today, the subcommittees on Military Procurement and Research and Development meet jointly to receive testimony from the Department of Defense on the DoD's policy and programs for establishing and maintaining information superiority by U.S. armed forces on the 21st Century battlefield and in the supporting Department of Defense infrastructure, implementation of these programs by the military departments and defense agencies, and measures being taken by the Department to protect the defense information infrastructure.

The information age is here. Rapidly advancing information-based technologies and an increasingly competitive global environment have thrust information into center stage in society, government, and warfare as we approach the beginning of the 21st Century. Operation Desert Storm highlighted the increasing dependence of U.S. Armed Forces on information-based technologies and the power of these technologies on the battlefield for intelligence, planning, maneuver, fires, command and control, and logistics. The lessons-learned from that conflict and further development of information systems and information technology are resulting in increasing applications of these technologies by the military services.

Information and information-based technologies have become pervasive and impact every facet of military operations. Indeed, they affect almost every facet of our national life. Information is becoming a strategic resource vital to national security. Increasingly, complex information systems are being integrated into traditional military operational disciplines such as mobility, logistics, command, control, communications, and intelligence. But, that integration is quite simply a reflection of the increasing integration of information and information technology into the United States domestic and international environment. The increasingly lower cost per bite of information and the efficiency with which data can be passed and processed make the use of information technology efficient and cost effective as information systems capabilities are extended to an unprecedented number of users. Broad access to, and use of, these information systems enhances military operations and is a key “enabler” in the potential military technical revolution that we began to see in the Persian Gulf War.

The application of information and information technology in our military forces and the supporting infrastructure in the Department of Defense and in our national life brings great capabilities. But, it also creates potentially serious vulnerabilities, as the military and other elements of national power become increasingly dependent upon information systems and information capabilities. Vulnerabilities that could be exploited by an adversary bent on disrupting U.S. military capabilities or on disrupting U.S. national life by attacking the information infrastructure that ties this nation together. It is both the promise of information technology and how we shall use it as a key “enabler” to achieve and maintain superiority on future battlefields, and the vulnerabilities that the use of information and information technology bring and how we plan to protect ourselves from these vulnerabilities that are the focus of today’s joint hearing.

Today’s hearing will be conducted as a series of panels. The first panel will address the DoD’s policy and programs for establishing and maintaining information superiority on the 21st Century battlefield and in the supporting defense information infrastructure. The second panel will discuss the implementation of these programs by the military services and how the military services are applying information technology on the battlefield. Panel 3 will review the results of the recently completed Defense Science Board Task Force on Information Warfare-Defense. We’ll then invite all the witnesses back to the table for the question and answer period.